



Friday
April 1, 2011

Weekly Views

Miami Correctional Facility (MCF) said goodbye to two long-time staffers with the retirement of Chaplain William Babb and Internal Affairs Investigator Chris Ramberger. Chaplain Babb has been with the department for 26 years, serving as an officer, sergeant and firearms instructor at Westville, Indiana State Prison and, most recently, MCF. Chris Ramberger was hired to Internal Affairs at MCF in October 2003. Both will be dearly missed.

Following a two-day audit conducted by the American Correctional Association (ACA), Indianapolis Re-Entry Educational Facility (IREF) was recommended for accreditation, its first since opening as a re-entry facility in 2006. IREF received a score of 100% on mandatory standards and a score of 99.5% on non-mandatory standards. IREF Superintendent Beckie Bennett applauded her staff for their continued commitment to excellence.

The GEO Group and New Castle Correctional Facility donated \$5,000 to Indiana Coalition Against Sexual Assault (INCASA) towards meeting IDOC's goal of raising \$10,000 for the victim organization in honor of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. If your facility would like to make a pledge or donation to INCASA, please contact IDOC Director of Victim Services Brent Myers (bmyers@idoc.in.gov). All pledges/donations should be submitted by April 22nd.

The second Tie Tying Class was held for the resident workers in PEN Products central office Career Resource Center. Offenders learned how to tie a couple of different knots that they can use when they are dressing for job interviews as they transition back to community life. The Career Resource center teaches a wide range of re-entry programming ranging from computer skills to tying a necktie.

It was a busy week for the Purposeful Living Units Serve (PLUS) unit at the Correctional Industrial Facility (CIF). The facility celebrated its fifth PLUS graduation for 19 participants. The PLUS unit donated over 40 teddy bears to local emergency services to use to comfort children during various crises. The PLUS participants also created Easter and Mother's Day cards to send to U.S. troops for the Hoosier Hero's program. Included with the cards are letters of encouragement for the soldiers.

Basketball players from Bethel College in Mishawka visited the Indiana State Prison (ISP) and played a game of basketball against the offender team. The ISP team won the game, as staff cheered them on.

The Future Soldier students at Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility shined over a dozen pairs of boots for staff to bring donations of canned goods for a restorative justice project. Staff collected 28 pounds of canned goods for a local food bank.

The South Bend Parole office held a luncheon in honor of Parole Agent Pamela Frederick, who is retiring after serving 21 years as a parole agent in South Bend. She began her career with the state in 1971 with Child Protective Services. Parole staff gathered to thank her for all her years of service to the Department and the community.

Congratulations to Pendleton Correctional Facility (PCF) Unit Team Secretary Norman Brennehan who was promoted this week to a Secretary 3 position. Norma will assume the duties as secretary to PCF Assistant Superintendent of Re-Entry Duane Alsip.

At Madison Juvenile Correctional Facility 14 students completed the "Youth at Risk" program taught by the volunteers from Step Up, Inc. The program teaches students about different types of risky behavior that teenagers often practice with or without thinking or because of lack of knowledge.

During 2010, the Branchville Correctional Facility's Fatherhood/Parenting Department recorded 64 offender fathers reading books through the Departments' Reading with Dad and Me program. 100 children's books and DVDs were sent home to the offenders' children! The children are allowed to keep the books and DVD's, thereby expanding the children's home library collection. The books are donated by several individuals and agencies. This program presents an opportunity for incarcerated fathers and their children to stay connected although they may live hundreds of miles or several states apart.

Despite a flat tire that delayed their arrival and frequent computer problems, the American Red Cross Bloodmobile at Westville Correctional Facility was again a success. 44 staff visited the Bloodmobile, and more volunteers were turned away due to a lack of time. A total of 36 full donations were collected.

Edinburgh Correctional Facility hosted their quarterly Blood Drive. Edinburgh staff have always been extremely generous when it comes to blood donations. Donations were down from the last drive due to the flu bug, but this time around, 22 of the facility's 59 staff members attempted to donate. Everyone who donated received an Indiana Pacer package that included a ticket to an upcoming Pacers game, a t-shirt, and food voucher.

New Castle Correctional Facility's Physical Plant Director Charles Hamby was named GEO's Employee of the Year. Mr. Hamby was also recognized by IDOC in 2010 as the Physical Plant Director of the Year.